

for raising inconvenient questions and pretending to a sanctity beyond his colleagues. Eventually, another nephew of Secundus threatened that they would all withdraw from his communion and make a schism (*recedere fit schisma facere*) unless he let the matter drop. "What business is it of yours what each has done?" asked the outspoken nephew, "It is to God that each must tender his account." The president thereupon drew in his horns, pronounced the acquittal of the accused, and with a general murmur of "*Deo gnificas*" they proceeded to the election of a bishop. Their choice fell upon Sylvanus, himself a traditor; much, it is said, to the indignation of the people of Circa, who raised cries of, "lit\* is a traditor; let another be elected. We want our bishop to be pure and upright." Sylvanus had rendered, without even a show of compulsion, one of the sacred silver lamps from the altar of his church. It is more than possible that the report of the proceedings at this synod, which is found only in works written specifically - but: by episcopal hands against the Donatists, is highly exaggerated, among the bishops present at Circa were those who, a few years later, were the principal leaders of the Donatist schism. But, even when all allowances are made; for party colouring<sup>1</sup>, the picture it gives of the Numidian Church is far from flattering.

During the life of Mensurius overt schism was avoided, though the Church of Carthage was by no means untroubled. For even before the persecution broke out, a certain lady named Lucilla had fallen under the censure of the ecclesiastical authorities,